

TURKEY Mehmet Gün, clerical worker (aged 19)

Mehmet Gün was detained at his home in Diyarbakır province, by men who are thought to be gendarmes, and the authorities have since denied having him in custody. Amnesty International is concerned that he may be at risk of torture or "disappearance".

Four men who said they were members of the security forces came to Mehmet Gün's house in the village of Yolaltın on 15 September, at about 10pm. They were in civilian clothes, but carried walkie-talkies and had military haircuts. From the way they were dressed, and the way they behaved, they appeared to be gendarmes. They searched the house, but apparently found nothing. They took Mehmet Gün into custody, saying only that they needed him to give a statement. They said he would be released after he had given the statement.

His family made written applications to Diyarbakir State Security Court on 18 and 19 September, to try to find out where he was, but they were told that no one by that name was in custody.

The day before Mehmet Gün was arrested, his uncle was apparently taken into custody. On 15 September, the men who later arrested Mehmet Gün went to see his other uncle, the village headman, and said they were looking for Mehmet Gün and would release his uncle if they were able to detain Mehmet Gün. The uncle was released by the Central Gendarmerie Station immediately after Mehmet Gün was detained.

Mehmet Gün had never been arrested before, but his father and sister were briefly detained in 1995, and he has a brother who is serving a prison sentence in Silvan Prison.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees and for notification of their families are frequently ignored. This is extremely distressing for the families of detainees and creates conditions in which "disappearances" and torture can occur.

People suspected of offences that fall under the jurisdiction of the State Security Courts can be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to four days. During the extended detention period detainees have the right of access to a lawyer, under certain conditions. In most cases this right is denied.

With no access to the outside world detainees are at the mercy of their interrogators. Torture is regularly used to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as unofficial punishment for presumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods in Turkey documented by Amnesty International include severe beatings, being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, suspending by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Mehmet Gün and asking for information as to his whereabouts;
- urging that he is not tortured or ill-treated;
- asking to be informed of any charges that may be brought against him;
- reminding the government of Turkey of its obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights, to which Turkey is a state party, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

APPEALS TO:

Diyarbakır Chief of Gendarmerie:

General Altay Tokat

Jandarma Komutanı

Jandarma Komutanlığı

Diyarbakır, Turkey

Telegrams: Diyarbakır Jandarma Komutanlığı

Faxes: +90 412 262 46 25

Salutation: Dear General

Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie

General Aytaç Yalman

Jandarma Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı

Bakanlıklar

Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Jandarma Genel Komutanı, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 418 9208

Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Rü_tü Kaz_m Yücelen

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanlık

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 417 0476

Please also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country. It is most important for our work that they should be aware of Amnesty International's members' concerns. Please forward any replies you receive to your Section, to be passed on to the International Secretariat.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 October 2000.